purchased by the beneficiaries themselves and then claims for reimbursement preferred by them;

(b) if so, the reasons for the change;

(c) whether Government are aware that the new procedure takes several months for the beneficiaries to recoup the money and causes them great inconvenience especially to senior citizens; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to mitigate the hardships resulting out of the new procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Adequate quantity of medicines is available in CGHS dispensaries. However, any drug prescribed by the Specialists and not available in the dispensary is made available to the beneficiaries from the Authorised Local Chemist on the basis of individual prescriptions.

In the case of CGHS dispensaries which do not have any authorised local chemist attached to them, the CGHS beneficiaries are permitted to purchase the medicines from the open market for which reimbursement is made by the Government.

The reimbursement of bills of Senior Citizens (CGHS pensioner Cardholders) who have been permitted to purchase drug items from open market has been delegated by the Government to the respective Additional Directors/Joint Directors of CGHS for expediting the payment to the pensioners so that they are not inconvenienced.

Selection of private hospitals under CGHS

559. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the rules for selection of private hospitals under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) after allegations of corruption;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to ensure that hospitals selected are scattered in different areas to help senior citizens who can hardly move and go to nearby hospitals only?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) There are no notified rules for recognition of private hospitals under CGHS. The terms and conditions for recognition of private hospitals/diagnostic centres under CGHS are given in the tender document which is posted on the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's website *viz. www.mohfw.nic.in*. The said tender document has *inter-alia* specified that Private hospitals with 100 or more beds are eligible to apply and those with less than 100 beds are not eligible. The last date for receipt of tenders from the private hospitals/diagnostic centres for recognition under CGHS in the various CGHS cities was 27th/28th/29th April, 2004 since the advertisement issued by CGHS in the leading newspapers had stated that tenders would be received up to 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the respective cities.

The CGHS selects hospitals for recognition only out of the tenders received subject to fulfilment of the criteria given in the tender document, the recommendations of the Inspection Committee and approval by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Legislation on HIV/AIDS

560. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the draft on the country's first comprehensive legislation on HIV/AIDS is ready;

(b) whether Government propose to introduce it in the current session of Parliament; and

(c) if so, the salient features of the proposed legislation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) The National AIDS Prevention and Control Policy states that the Government will strengthen anti-discrimination and other protective laws that protect vulnerable groups, people living with HIV/AIDS and people with disabilities from discrimination in both the private and public sectors. Deliberations